DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 274 819 CE 045 189

AUTHOR Horton, Robert L.; Newcomb, L. H.
TITLE Identification and Selection of the Appropriate Leadership Activities for Ohio's Teenage 4-H Members. Summary of Research 40.
INSTITUTION Ohio State Univ., Columbus. Dept. of Agricultural Education.
PUB DATE 85
NOTE 16p.
PUB TYPE Reports - Research/Technical (143)

EDRS PRICE MF01/PC01 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS Adolescents; *Leadership Training; *Learning Activities; *Participant Satisfaction; Postsecondary Education; *Program Attitudes; Secondary Education; Student Attitudes; *Student Organizations; *Volunteers
IDENTIFIERS *4 H Clubs; Ohio

ABSTRACT

A study was conducted to compare 4-H agent, volunteer leader, and teenage member perceptions concerning the importance of selected leadership activities for teenage 4-H members, and the extent to which teenagers should be involved in carrying out these leadership activities. Data were gathered from a sample of 200 teenage 4-H members, 200 volunteer leaders, and the total population of 88 Ohio 4-H agents. Analysis of data revealed the following: (1) 4-H agent, volunteer leader, and teenage member perceptions of importance and involvement differ for certain teenage leadership activities; (2) because agent and member ratings of leadership activities differ more often than leader and member ratings, one can conclude that volunteer leaders and teenage members are more closely aligned on their perception of appropriate teenage leadership activities than are agents and members; (3) volunteer leaders and teenage members tend to rate club-centered leadership activities higher on importance and involvement while 4-H agents tend to rate county-centered leadership activities higher; (4) teenage members are as concerned as volunteer leaders with helping 4-H club members make money for the 4-H club and seeing that members participate in the county fair; and (5) teenage members are not as concerned as 4-H agents with assisting in the planning of the county's summer camp programs. The study recommended that 4-H agents reexamine their emphasis on particular teenage leadership activities and that agents shoud consider members' preferences for more club-centered activities and be aware of the differences between teen and adult leader perceptions. The study also recommended evaluation of leadership activities perceived as important by teenage members. (KC)

****
* Reproductions supplied by EDRS are the best that can be made *
* from the original document. *
****

SUMMARY OF RESEARCH

DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURAL EDUCATION

The Ohio State University
Columbus, Ohio 43210

ED274819

IDENTIFICATION AND SELECTION OF THE APPROPRIATE LEADERSHIP ACTIVITIES FOR OHIO'S TEENAGE 4-H MEMBERS

ROBERT L. HORTON AND L. H. NEWCOMB

INTRODUCTION

In 4-H volunteer work, one of the major ongoing responsibilities of 4-H agents and volunteer leaders is to identify and emphasize appropriate teenage leadership activities. This responsibility, as described in the national 4-H publication, Teenage Leader Development (1982), includes the facilitation of leader training opportunities which:

1. Enable members to function as responsible teen leaders.
2. Provide guidance for members while taking on additional leadership responsibilities.
3. Allow members to plan, develop and implement county 4-H activities.

CE045189

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
Office of Educational Research and Improvement
EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)

This document has been reproduced as received from the person or organization originating it.

☐ Minor changes have been made to improve reproduction quality.

• Points of view or opinions stated in this document do not necessarily represent official OERI position or policy.

"PERMISSION TO REPRODUCE THIS MATERIAL HAS BEEN GRANTED BY

TO THE EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)."

IDENTIFICATION AND SELECTION OF THE APPROPRIATE LEADERSHIP ACTIVITIES FOR OHIO'S TEENAGE 4-H MEMBERS

4. Allow members to learn about the many facets of the organization.
5. Encourage members to serve in leadership roles whenever possible, and provide them feedback on their leadership performance.

While this adult leader responsibility is not new to the Cooperative Extension Service, nevertheless, 4-H agents and volunteer leaders seem ineffective in identifying and supporting appropriate leadership activities for teenagers. Several authors (Stogdill, 1981; Clarke, 1972; Bobbitt, 1978) have stated that approaches to leadership training are often times a collection of exercises that have been used year after year and reflect those leadership activities which leader trainers perceive as important for the novice leader to perform.

Stogdill (1981) defined leadership training to include two elements: a perception about the significant leadership activities to be emphasized through training; and a decision to select training exercises which support the expectations placed upon a leader trainee's performance. Perceptions about the importance of teenage leadership activities and the extent to which teenagers should be involved in carrying out these activities are used by adult leaders as they decide which leadership activities to emphasize through leadership training. These adult leader perceptions are influenced by past experiences, years with the program and personal attributes, Knox (1969). Under these conditions, however, the views and feelings of teenage members concerning the same leadership activities tend to be overlooked.

A review of the Extension literature has shown that many researchers considered evaluations by clientele in addition to adult leaders to be an important part of the evaluation process. As stated by Hampton (1973) clients are usually in the best position to make judgments about the emphasis of selected activities. According to Tolley (1976) client perceptions concerning the importance of certain leadership activities are equally important as the perceptions of Extension personnel. Tolley stressed that this is particularly true in programs which rely upon voluntary participation, such as 4-H, and voluntary acceptance of activities to be emphasized.

As Zenger (1974) pointed out, leadership training must go beyond the traditional notions of the organization. Leadership training must serve to emphasize the appropriate activities for novice leaders based upon the organization's study of trainer and trainee perceptions of selected leadership activities.

This study focused on comparing 4-H agent, volunteer leader and teenage member perceptions concerning the importance of selected teenage leadership activities and the extent to which teenagers should be involved in carrying out these activities. From this knowledge a set of recommended teenage leadership activities was identified and presented to decision makers for consideration in the planning of future teen leader training sessions.

Purpose and Objectives

The purpose of this study was to compare 4-H agent, volunteer leader, and teenage member perceptions concerning the importance of selected leadership activities for teenage 4-H members, and the extent to which teenagers should be involved in carrying out these leadership activities.

The study was designed to answer the following questions:

1. What is the importance of selected leadership activities for teenagers as viewed by 4-H agents, volunteer leaders, and teenage 4-H members?
2. To what extent do 4-H agents, volunteer leaders, and teenage 4-H members feel teenagers should be involved in selected leadership activities?
3. What is the set of recommended leadership activities for Ohio's teenage 4-H members.

Procedures

A questionnaire was developed to measure agent, leader and member perception concerning selected leadership activities for Ohio's teenage 4-H members. A total of 87 leadership activities were identified from a variety of 4-H teen leader publications and used in the body of the questionnaire.

A review of the literature was made pertaining to the measurement of the variables: (1) level of importance of selected leadership activities; and (2) level of involvement with selected leadership activities. From this review two five point Likert type scales were identified to measure agent, leader and member perceptions concerning the selected leadership activities. Reliability coefficients for the instrument on the scales of importance and involvement were the same for the two groups, volunteer leaders and teenage members; $r = .95$ and $r = .91$, respectively. For the group 4-H agents the instrument reliability was $r = .92$ for both scales.

The 1982 Ohio Statistical Results indicated that 20,593 adults served as volunteer leaders of 4-H clubs and 48,932 youth between the ages of 13-19 participated as members. From the formula offered by Cochran (1977) for estimating sample size

$$n_o = \frac{t^2pq}{d^2}$$

where t=risk of getting "unlucky" sample, d=acceptable margin of error, and p=proportion in the sample possessing the desirable characteristic; it was estimated that a sample of 200 volunteer leaders, or 1% of the total population was an acceptable sample size. Likewise, it was estimated that a sample of 200 teenage 4-H members or approximately .5% of the total population was an acceptable sample size. As for the agents, the total population of 88 Ohio 4-H agents was used.

Of the individuals surveyed in 1983, 77 agents (96%), 164 leaders (82%) and 142 members (71%) responded with usable questionnaires. A one way analysis of variance including a Least Significant Difference post-hoc analysis was applied to test the differences between the mean importance and involvement scores of the three groups at the .05 level of significance. Using Delberg's Nominal Group Technique, a state task force consisting of three district 4-H Specialists, two State 4-H Specialists and one 4-H volunteer leader examined the mean importance and involvement scores of the three groups: 4-H agents, volunteer leaders and teenage members. After careful examination and discussion of the three group's mean score, task force members recommended a set of leadership activities for Ohio's teenage 4-H members.

Findings

From the importance and involvement scores collected from Ohio's 4-H agents, volunteer leaders and teenage members the data revealed that agent and member ratings of importance and involvement differed for approximately 35 of the 87 leadership activities. Agent and leader ratings of importance and involvement differed for approximately 22 of the leadership activities. The data also revealed that leader and member ratings of importance and involvement differed for approximately 10 of the leadership activities.

Importance Scores

The data reported in Table 1 reveal that agents rated 13 leadership activities significantly higher on level of importance than members.

Both 4-H agent and volunteer leaders rated the leadership activity, "Assist in the planning of a 4-H parents night for the local 4-H club," significantly higher on level of importance than teenage members.

Of the 87 leadership activities 3 were scored significantly higher by club leaders on level of importance than teenage members (Table 2).

Teenage members rated 15 leadership activities significantly higher on level of importance than 4-H agents. These data are reported in Table 3.

Two out of the 87 leadership activities were rated significantly higher by teenage members on level of importance than volunteer leaders. The 2 activities were "Recruit leaders for a 4-H club," and "Help members choose a project."

Table 4 illustrates the 5 leadership activities rated significantly higher by teenage members on level of importance than 4-H agents or volunteer leaders.

The three groups agreed on the level of importance of 48 out of 87 leadership activities. Volunteer leaders and teenage members agreed on the level of importance of 70 leadership activities and 4-H agents and teenage members agreed on the level of importance of 53 leadership activities.

Involvement Scores

The data reported in Table 5 indicate that agents rated 10 leadership activities significantly higher on level of involvement than members.

Of the 87 leadership activities, 2 were rated significantly higher by volunteer leaders on level of involvement than teenage members. The two leadership activities were "Encourage parents to attend 4-H club activities," and "Assist with the preparation of the club's exhibit at the local county fair."

Teenage members rated 12 leadership activities significantly higher on level of involvement than 4-H agents. These data are reported in Table 6.

Two out of the 87 leadership activities were rated significantly higher by teenage members on level of involvement than volunteer leaders. The 2 activities were "Frequently ask members in the club if they are satisfied with its operation and their progress as 4-H members" and "Recruit leaders for 4-H clubs."

Table 7 illustrates the 8 leadership activities rated significantly higher by teenage members on level of involvement than 4-H agents or volunteer leaders.

The three groups agreed on the level of 53 out of 87 leadership activities. Volunteer leaders and teenage members agreed on the level of involvement of 75 leadership activities and 4-H agents and teenage members agreed on the level of involvement of 57 leadership activities.

Task Force Recommendations

Once task force members had completed their review of the findings, group members were asked to discuss which leadership activities should be identified as the ten most recommended for Ohio's teenage members. Table 8 summarizes the group's consensus of the ten most recommended leadership activities which includes the overall ranking of 4-H agents', club advisors' and teenage members' mean importance and involvement ratings.

Of the ten leadership activities chosen by task force members the activity "Give recognition to younger members for a job well done" was ranked consistently high on the 4-H agents', volunteer leaders' and teenage members' overall mean importance and involvement scores. The leadership activity "Participate in 4-H planning committees at the club, county and community level" was ranked the lowest on the overall mean importance and involvement scores of leaders and members.

Three of the leadership activities recommended by task force members achieved a ranking of 1 on at least one of the mean importance or involvement ratings by either agents, leaders or members. These three activities were: "Assist a new 4-H club member through their first year" achieved the highest ranked teenage member mean involvement rating; "Encourage a club member to re-enroll" achieved the highest ranked 4-H agent mean importance

and involvement rating; and "Assist with the preparation of the club's exhibit at the local county fair" achieved the highest ranked leader mean involvement rating.

Conclusions

The following conclusions are based on the interpretation of the data in this study.

1. 4-H agent, volunteer leader, and teenage member perceptions of importance and involvement differ for certain teenage leadership activities.

2. Because agent and member ratings of leadership activities differ more often than leader and member ratings, one can conclude that volunteer leaders and teenage members are more closely aligned on their perception of appropriate teenage leadership activities than are agents and members.

3. Volunteer leaders and teenage members tend to rate club centered leadership activities higher on importance and involvement while 4-H agents tend to rate county centered leadership activities higher on importance and involvement.

4. Teenage members are as concerned as volunteer leaders with helping 4-H club members make money for the 4-H club, and seeing that club members participate in the county fair.

5. The greatest difference between agent and member ratings of importance was with the activity, "Assist with the planning of the county's summer camp program." 4-H agents rated this activity significantly higher than teenage members. One may conclude that teenage members are not as concerned as 4-H agents with assisting in the planning of the county's summer camp program.

Recommendations

The following recommendations are made for further consideration by Extension practitioners and Extension researchers.

1. Since the majority of significantly different ratings existed between 4-H agents and teenage members, it appears that 4-H agents need to reexamine their emphasis on particular teenage leadership activities.

2. Since the data revealed that teens are more likely to become involved in leadership activities that are club centered rather than county centered, 4-H agents need to take these data into account when planning leader training opportunities for teens. State and District 4-H specialists can help by designing special in-service sessions to discuss teen leader training approaches supported by these findings.

3. Some significant differences occurred where teenage members rated leadership activities higher on level of importance and involvement than volunteer leaders. Volunteer leaders need to be made aware of these leadership activities during county leader training sessions.

4. The Extension organization should seriously examine the division between youth and adult leader perceptions, determine why decisions are made based upon the perceptions of adult leaders, and if such decision making is detrimental to the organization.

5. A follow-up study should be conducted which addresses the leadership activities rated extremely high or low by agents, leaders and members, and why these individual feels the way they do.

6. Further investigation is needed to help 4-H agents understand the leadership activities performed most often by teenage 4-H members, and to determine if experienced teen leaders differ from inexperienced teens in their perceptions of selected leadership activities.

7. Research is needed to determine if the findings of this study are true in other states. What are the underlying factors that make agent, leader, and member ratings different?

8. The need exists to examine leadership training programs which emphasize the leadership activities perceived as important by teenage members, and evaluate the effectiveness of these programs. How well do these leadership training programs prepare a teenage member for a leadership role in 4-H?

References

Bobbitt, R. (1978). Organizational behavior. Englewood Cliffs, New Jersey: Prentice Hall.

Clark, A.W. (1972). Leadership beliefs of Australian managers. Personnel Psychology, 25, 625-638.

Cochran, W.C. (1977). Sampling techniques. New York: John Wiley & Sons, pp. 72-88.

Hampton, L.A. (September, 1973). "Evaluating continuing education programs," Adult Leadership, pp. 105-119.

Knox, A.B. (1969). Continuous program evaluation. In N. Shaw (ed.), Administration of Continuing Education (pp. 368-391). Washington, D.C.: National Association for Public School Adult Education.

National 4-H Council (1982). Teenage leader development. Washington, D.C.

Stogdill, R. (1981). Handbook of leadership. New York: The Free Press.

Tolley, M.J. (1976). Factors influencing Tennessee teen 4-H leader perceptions and performance of leadership tasks. Unpublished master's thesis, University of Tennessee, Knoxville.

Zenger, J.H. (1974). Third generation manager training. MSU Business Topics, 21, pp. 23-28.

Table 1

Level of Importance - Activities Rated Significantly Higher by Agents Than Members

* Promote in community clubs the idea of attending the county's summer camp program.
* Visit local 4-H clubs and share experiences gained through participation in club activities and community events.
* Participate in 4-H planning committees at the club, county, and community level.
* Assist with the planning of the county's summer camp program.
* Serve as a camp counselor during the county's summer camp program.
* Assist the club leader with managing the 4-H club.
* Help an adult leader plan, organize, and carry out one or more major activities.
* Attend 4-H teen leader training activities.
* Participate in older 4-H member activities, events, and programs.
* Invite a boy or girl to attend a 4-H activity.
* Give talks and demonstrations at school and other meetings to inform parents and youth about 4-H.
* Serve on a county advisory committee that determines priorities and establishes guidelines for the county's 4-H program.
* Serve on a county advisory committee that determines priorities and establishes guidelines for the county's teen leader program.

Table 2

Level of Importance - Activities Rated Significantly Higher by Leaders than Members

* Help plan a 4-H tour.
* Assist with the preparation of the club's exhibit at the local county fair.
* Encourage parents to attend 4-H club events.

Table 3

Level of Importance - Activities Rated Significantly Higher by Members than Agents

* Assist in organizing new 4-H clubs in the local community.
* Assist with county-wide fund raising projects.
* Help plan and conduct money raising activities.
* Assist with money raising events for special purposes.
* Assist members with getting exhibits to the fair.
* Help members arrange for transportation to meetings, when necessary.
* Assist with the checking of record books and give suggestions to the members for improvement.
* Offer to explain to a 4-H parent the 4-H project their child has chosen.
* Help members understand the Junior Fair exhibit requirements.
* See that the news reporter gets the club news accurately reported.
* Supervise members as they fill out their enrollment forms.

(table continues)

* See that the club secretary is properly completing the club's business minutes.
* Help a member find guidance in project completion.
* Suggest topics for a demonstration or illustrated talk.
* Advise beginning members in the presence of their parents so both will understand what is expected of a 4-H member.

Table 4

Level of Importance - Activities Rated Significantly Higher by Members than Agents or Leaders

* Become involved in 4-H money raising activities at the local county fair.
* Help members get their exhibits to the fair.
* Frequently ask members in the club if they are satisfied with its operation and their progress as a 4-H member.
* Ask a 4-H parent to assist with some phase of the club program.
* Help a member secure the materials necessary for a project.

Table 5

Level of Importance - Activities Rated Significantly Higher by Agents than Members

* Promote in community clubs the idea of attending the county's summer camp program.
* Participate in 4-H planning committees at the club, county, and community level.

(table continues)

* Assist with the planning of the county's summer camp program.
* Serve s a camp counselor during the county's summer camp program.
* Attend 4-H leader training activities.
* Participate in older 4-H member activities, events, and programs.
* Invite a boy or girl to join 4-H.
* Invite a boy or girl to attend a 4-H activity.
* Encourage a club member to re-enroll.
* Give talks and demonstrations at schools and other meetings to inform parents and youth about 4-H.

Table 6

Level of Importance - Activities Rated Significantly Higher by members than Agents or Leaders

* Assist in organizing new 4-H clubs in the local community.
* Assist with money raising events for special purposes.
* Assist members with getting exhibits to the fair.
* Assist with the checking of record books, and give suggestions to the members for improvement.
* Offer to explain to a 4-H parent the 4-H project their child has chosen.
* Help members understand the Junior Fair exhibit requirements.
* See that the news reporter gets the club news accurately reported.
* Supervise members as they fill out their enrollment forms.
* See that the club secretary is properly completing the club's business minutes.

(table continues)

* Help a member find guidance in project completion.
* Suggest topics for a demonstration or illustrated talk.
* Advise beginning members in the presence of their parents so both will understand what is expected of a 4-H member.

Table 7

Level of Importance - Activities Rated Significantly Higher by members than by Agents or Leaders

* Assist with county-wide fund raising projects.
* Help plan and conduct club money raising activities.
* Become involved in 4-H money raising activities at the county fair.
* Help members arrange for transportation to meetings when necessary.
* Help members get their exhibits to the fair.
* Work with beginning members to evaluate the progress and outcome of their projects.
* Ask a 4-H parent to assist with some phase of the club program.
* Help a member secure the materials necessary for a project.

Table 8

The Ten Most Recommended Teenage Leadership Activities By Task Force Members, Including the Overall Ranking of Mean Involvement and Importance Scores

Statement of Activity	Mean Score Rank by Importance			Mean Score Rank by Importance		
	4-HA	CL	TM	4-HA	CL	TM
Assist a new 4-H club member throughout his or her first year.	5	3	2	3	4	1
Participate in 4-H planning committees at the club, county and community level.	8[a]	28	34	8[a]	30	32
Assist with the preparation of the club's exhibit at the local county fair.	21	4[b]	12	10	1[e]	14
Give recognition to younger members for a job well done.	2	2	4	4	2	2
Help first year members understand the club business meeting.	15	9	7	13	12	13
Invite a boy or girl to attend a 4-H activity.	6[d]	7	10	5[d]	7	9
Encourage a club member to re-enroll.	1[c]	12	3	1[a]	11	5
Work with club members to accept the new members.	24	11	11	20	9	15
Invite a boy or girl to join 4-H.	3	6	9	2[d]	5	8

a 4-HA rating significantly different from CL & TM ratings @ .05 level of significance.
b CL rating significantly different from 4-HA & TM ratings @ .05 level of significance.
c 4-HA rating significantly different from CL rating @ .05 level of significance.
d 4-HA rating significantly different from TM rating @ .05 level of significance.
e CL rating significantly different from TM rating @ .05 level of significance.

SUMMARY OF RESEARCH SERIES

Leadership is a very elusive construct which is of concern to many groups such as the military, corporations, higher education, and, certainly, a youth organization such as 4-H. The identification and selection of appropriate activities for leadership development would be important information for persons associated with youth development. This study pushes back the frontier of knowledge for both Extension practitioners and researchers concerned with leadership development in youth.

The authors are recognized for their scholarship in preparing this summary. Dr. L. H. Newcomb is a Professor and Chairperson, Department of Agricultural Education, The Ohio State University. Mr. Horton was a graduate student in the Department of Agricultural Education, The Ohio State University. Special appreciation is due to Joan S. Thomson, Coordinator of Staff Development, Cooperative Extension Service, The Pennsylvania State University; Jerry Parsons, State Leader, 4-H and Youth Programs, The Iowa Cooperative Extension Service, Iowa State University; and Dr. Charles W. Lifer, Assisstant Director, 4-H, the Ohio Cooperative Extension Service, The Ohio State University for their critical review of this manuscript prior to its publication.

Research has been an important function of the Department of Agricultural Education since it was established in 1917. Research conducted by the Department has generally been in the form of graduate theses, staff studies and funded research. The purpose of this series to make useful knowledge from such research available to practitioners in the profession. Individuals desiring additional information on this topic should examine the references cited.

Larry Miller
Department of Agricultural Education

SR 40 1985